

The War Paper for Women

VOTES FOR WOMEN

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

VOL. IX. (Fourth Series) No. 419.

SEPTEMBER, 1916.

Price 1d. Monthly (Post Free)

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DEDICATION

To the brave women who to-day are fighting for freedom: to the noble women who all down the ages kept the flag flying and looked forward to this day without seeing it; to all women all over the world, of whatever race, or creed, or calling, whether they be with us or against us in this fight, we dedicate this paper.

THE OUTLOOK

A considerable change has come over the Suffrage situation since our August number went to press. The introduction of the Government's Special Register Bill on August 14, framed to meet only the case of those soldiers, sailors and male war workers who, through the war, had lost the votes they would otherwise have been qualified to exercise, served to expose finally the impossibility, foreshadowed by us for many months past, of dealing effectively with Registration reform in anything short of a Franchise Bill. The Government's Bill was read a second time on August 16 and sent to a Committee of the whole House; and Parliament adjourned on August 23 without proceeding with the further stages of the Bill, which is now pretty universally regarded as shelved.

A Plea for a Wider Measure

The case for its failure is plain. The House of Commons, led by Sir Edward Carson, declined to accept a Bill that did not enfranchise soldiers and sailors as such, and did not even provide the means of voting in the case of those men on active or war service whose existing votes were guaranteed under the Bill. Similarly, led by Sir John Simon, the House refused to admit the Prime Minister's plea that a wider Bill could not be substituted because it would re-open controversy—notably on Woman Suffrage. Sir John Simon, in an admirable speech, repudiated the suggestion that now was not the time for dealing with franchise reform, insisted on the right of women to share in the election of the Parliament that will deal with reconstruction after the war, and met Sir Edward Carson "on common ground" in regarding the Bill as a "stop-gap that does not solve any franchise problem whatever." Would it not really be better, he asked—

to see whether a simple residential qualification for adult suffrage could not be the basis on which the Parliament of reconstruction should be built up?

It will never be the case that we shall agree on this matter, but the temper in which this problem may now be approached is a temper which is not likely to be repeated, and upon the solution of this problem depends all sorts of things in the future.

Sir John Simon concluded with the suggestion that the House of Commons should "have an opportunity of propounding a simple scheme for

a national franchise which is based on a simple residential qualification."

A Conference Proposed

The Prime Minister (whose conversion to Woman Suffrage, announced on his introduction of the Bill, is commented on in our leading article) replied favourably to Sir John Simon's suggestion, saying—

Let us by all means use the time—those of us who are not absolutely absorbed in the conduct of the War—in those months to see if we cannot work out by general agreement some scheme under which, both as regards the electorate and the disturbance of electoral power a Parliament can be created at the end of the War capable and adequate for discharging these tasks, and commanding the confidence of the country.

Mr. Walter Long followed this up with a more definite proposal that, during the summer recess, "a representative conference, not only of parties, but of groups," might be set up, to deal with electoral reform, registration and redistribution, and to produce an agreed scheme, which, in the form of a Bill, would create the machine for electing the Parliament to deal with reconstruction. "I believe," he added—

that a conference such as I have suggested would have a great result. I hope that in the short time during which Parliament is released from its duties we shall all turn our attention to this question.

The Scheme Formulated

Both Mr. Wardle and Sir John Simon asked the Prime Minister on August 21 whether steps will be promptly taken "to sum up such a conference"; and Mr. Asquith, calling the suggestion "a very valuable one," said—"I hope to be able to give effect to it, and that an indication of the procedure to be adopted may shortly be made." In the House of Lords, on the same day, Lord Crewe referred cautiously, when moving the second reading of the Parliament Bill, to the possibilities of a wider settlement of the franchise question, but promised Lord Cromer that the Government would not convert the Special Register Bill into a Woman Suffrage Bill, which was a reference to the idea thrown out by the Speaker on August 16, that by an "instruction" to the Government the House of Commons could cause women to be included in that Bill. This idea has, however, been swamped by the more practicable conference scheme. We are sorry that space prevents our giving all these debates in full, but recommend our readers to procure for themselves the Parliamentary Debates of August 14 and 16 (published by Wyman and Sons, 29, Breems Buildings, Fetter Lane, E.C., price 3d. each).

The Adult Suffrage Movement

The Adult-Suffrage movement, which we ourselves have urged as the only solution of the Registration problem, grows rapidly, and is by no means confined to any one political party. At a meeting in the House of Commons on August 21, presided over by Sir John Simon, some thirty M.P.'s representing all parties were present, and the following resolution was passed unanimously:—

That this meeting is of opinion that provision should be made during the war for a wide extension of the suffrage so as to secure a register representative of men and women to elect the Parliament which will deal with the various problems of reconstruction after the war.

According to the London correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, Sir John Simon has handed in this resolution in the form of a notice of motion to come up for discussion after the recess. A great deal will depend upon the reception of this motion in the House, which again will depend largely upon the success of the franchise conference during the recess. The Suffrage situation has, indeed, become a Parliamentary one, for the moment, and we shall watch its development in the next few weeks with the deepest interest.

Public Opinion

In another part of the paper we give extracts from newspapers all over the country, showing how ready public opinion is for the settlement of the Suffrage question, even, in many cases, upon adult lines. Not less interesting is the attitude of those organs which we were wont to regard in the past, perhaps wrongly, as irrevocably opposed to us. Even the *Times*, which has not yet definitely pronounced upon the subject, appears to face it with comparative equanimity in its leading article of August 22, where it doubts "whether it is possible, or even desirable, to stop short at that point [i.e., 'one gun, one vote'] if once the question of the franchise is raised at all." The *Spectator* (August 26), commenting upon Lord Cromer's claim in the House of Lords that women could not be enfranchised without the question being first submitted to the electorate (in itself an advance upon the old uncompromising Anti-suffrage position) tempers its agreement with his main contention by the words—"though we are not so confident as Lord Cromer in the power of the anti-suffragists to resist the demand for the vote if it is made after the war by the women who have been doing war work"—which amounts to something like a conversion to the principle, at all events, of Woman Suffrage. We heartily welcome every sign on the part of former opponents that they are at least ready to rejudge the question in the light of the revolution that has taken place in our social conditions owing to the war. That is the attitude of the wise statesman as compared with that of the mere party politician, and we cannot have too much of it inside or outside Parliament.

The Debate on Munitions

Anyone who doubts the new position that women have won in the State during the last two years should read the debate on the Ministry of Munitions Vote, in the House of Commons on August 15. The new Minister, Mr. E. S. Montagu, concluded a eulogy of women munition workers with the words—"Where is the man now who would deny to woman the civil rights which she has earned by hard work?"—and the remark was greeted with cheers. Mr. W. C. Anderson was called to order, though unsuccessfully, by Sir Frederick Banbury, for mentioning Woman Suffrage in his subsequent speech; but the Speaker did not intervene, either in this case or during the Second Reading debate of the Special Register Bill when the same point was raised. The fact is that no question touching woman's position can be discussed without a reference to her voteless condition, which is one of the strongest arguments for allowing the matter to be cleared out of the way as speedily

as possible. This is specially true of her industrial position, as the debate on munitions showed clearly enough, with its revelations of the low wages paid in large numbers of cases to the women by whom, in Mr. Montagu's words, very largely "our armies have been saved and victory assured."

The Price of Living

For general buying the value of £1 is already down to the 12s. 6d. of the days of peace. But for buying of food, it is down below 10s. The Board of Trade tells us that food prices have gone up 65 per cent. since the war, and though there is a slight reduction this month, they will certainly continue to rise as long as the war lasts. This is absolutely inevitable, for you cannot convert whole fertile provinces into dust and ashes without reducing the crops, and you cannot employ nearly all the active men of Europe in killing one another without reducing labour. Food prices depend ultimately upon crops and labour, and if crops and labour are reduced no power can prevent the prices rising. That is one of the insistent reasons why women, upon whom the burden of feeding families chiefly falls, must have a voice in decisions of peace or war. The Women's Co-operative Guild have lately published information collected among their members, showing that mothers are now compelled to reduce the amount of food necessary for health in their families, beginning, as usual, with themselves, and thus often injuring the babies or the unborn. *Punch's* cartoon of the laughing mother, who cares only that her "boys" at the Front are being well-fed, strangely misses the point. It is not the mothers in every class who are starving but only the mothers of the poor, who always go without when prices rise. And we do not think the "boys" find it a joking matter that their mothers and wives and children are going short at home—especially if they feel, as thousands do, that the shortage is largely preventable.

Ways Out and Wages

But granted that food necessarily costs more in war, something may yet be done to prevent the race growing weaker through hunger. One way is to raise wages. The railwaymen, who got a rise of 5s. a week last October, now demand a further 10s. for all grades owing to the rise in prices, and will probably get it. There is a strong demand for increasing the Old Age Pension to 7s. 6d., and the Prime Minister (who says he is "considering the question") has agreed that it may be raised locally up to that amount in special cases. In "controlled" munition works, where women get only 4d. an hour on time, and actually make only 4d. on piece work, the Women Workers' Federation is now demanding 5d. an hour, and extra rates for overtime. It may be said that a rise in Pensions and Government wages can only come out of taxation, and that is generally true. If the war is to continue and the people are to live, the taxpayers must be content to give up more and more of their wealth and comfort, and even their food. It is further proposed that the Government should take over the control of all necessities of life—should do the purchasing and rationing for us all. To judge by the Government's experiment in sugar, they do not seem very clever at the business. Certainly, they were successful in giving the coalowners an extra 2s. 6d. per ton, but that success was the wrong way on. How absurd that in these matters, which touch them so closely, women should have no voice!

In Church—or in the Church?

Dr. Percy Dearmer is the author of one of the most interesting contributions (in the *Manchester Guardian*, August 24) to the controversy which raged last month (almost like a pre-war "silly season" newspaper correspondence) round the Bishop of London's recommendation, since withdrawn, that women should speak in church during the forthcoming National Mission. Of the disputed point of St. Paul's ruling in the matter, he says what seems to us the last word:—

It is strange that a huge incubus should have been laid on religious work with no firmer basis than the probable misinterpretation of a difficult text. I am sure that the real reasons are of another nature, and are the creation of habit and emotion. We all of us have a point somewhere in

our minds where we dislike innovation merely because it is new.

Undoubtedly, many people for whom we have great respect sincerely believe that they base their opposition to women preachers upon doctrinal reasons; but, knowing how instinctively most of us dislike innovation, we are inclined to believe that Dr. Dearmer has put his finger on the real, if sub-conscious, reason for all the clamour on the subject. In any case, it is interesting to compare his contention with the artless reply of another London clergyman to a newspaper interviewer:—

We shall accept the aid of competent and approved women in connection with the National Mission, but we shall not decide whether it will be in the church or in a hall until after the holidays.

"We shall accept the aid of women." Their status, of course, is a secondary consideration!

Suffrage in America

Mr. Charles E. Hughes, Republican nominee for the Presidency of the United States, has declared his support, not only of the principle of woman suffrage, but of the Federal amendment to the Constitution, which would place the question on a national instead of a State basis. In the words of his own telegram sent to Senator Sutherland, of Utah:—

My view is that the proposed amendment should be submitted and ratified, and the subject removed from political discussion.

This is a triumph for the Congressional Union for Women's Suffrage (Washington) which has worked without ceasing since its inception for the passage of the Federal amendment, and for its adoption as a plank by all the political parties. Of these, the Republican, the Socialist, the Prohibition, and the Progressive parties have now all declared in favour of the Federal amendment. The Democratic party alone holds out, President Wilson adhering to his belief that the enfranchisement of women should be left to each State to decide for itself. The situation is all the more interesting when we reflect that there are enough women voters in the United States to turn a Presidential election—which makes an anti-Government suffrage policy (i.e., an opposition to President Wilson and the Democratic party which is in power) one that politicians cannot afford to ignore. According, however, to the *Woman's Journal* (Boston) the National American Women Suffrage Association have recently interviewed President Wilson on the subject and have hopes of his being converted to the Federal amendment policy. If he does come into line with Mr. Hughes, this will be no less a tribute to the initiative of the C.U. for W.S. than to the statesmanship of the older Suffrage Society in recognising the more forward policy.

Items of Interest

Among new occupations in which women are said to be doing excellent work are those of commercial traveller, lock-keeper, and general engineering work in the Clyde shipyards, where some 14,000 have now been introduced.

The War Office is now employing women chauffeurs, mainly on A.S.C. cars, at salaries ranging from 25s. (garage washers) up to 52s. 6d. (superintendents). Applications may be made to the Commandant, Miss Ellis (72, Upper Berkeley Street, W.).

Mrs. Fawcett contributes an interesting account of the Russian hospital work of the N.U.W.S.S. to the Russian Supplement of the *Times* (August 26).

A number of mill girls in a Manchester factory volunteered for hospital work, and were sent as orderlies to Southport and Whalley; the firm paying them £1 a week while engaged in hospital work.

Belfast Corporation refused on August 8 to co-opt an ex-Lady Mayoress as Councillor, on the ground that the electors had given no mandate for the admission of women to the Corporation.

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SUFFRAGISTS AND THE SITUATION

As soon as the situation developed, at the beginning of August, through the Prime Minister's announcement that he intended to state on August 14 the intentions of the Government with regard to Registration Reform, a long statement was laid before Mr. Asquith, signed by the representatives of fourteen Woman Suffrage Societies (including the United Suffragists and headed by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies), presenting the claims of women to be included in any scheme of electoral reform involving the admission of fresh men voters to the franchise.

The Northern Men's Federation wrote a letter to the same effect to the Prime Minister, signed by representative Magistrates and Town Councillors of Glasgow and Edinburgh, and added a request that an interview should be granted to them if they came to London. The Prime Minister was unable, however, to accede to this request, and the deputation were received on August 18 by Mr. Gulland, Chief Liberal Whip, with whose statements we deal elsewhere. The members of the deputation sent a further letter to the Press on August 21, repudiating the idea of adult suffrage for men and only a fancy franchise for women, and demanding full suffrage for both if the adult basis were decided upon.

The Adult Suffrage View

The Adult Suffrage point of view was at the same time presented to Mr. Asquith in a reasoned statement drawn up by the "Votes for All" Committee, the signatories to which included a large number of well-known and influential men and women in every walk of life, and among them the following members of the United Suffragists:—Mrs. Hertha Ayton, M.I.E.E., the Rev. Lewis Donaldson, Mr. George Lansbury, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Miss Anna Martin, Mr. H. W. Nevinston, Miss Evelyn Sharp. The case for Adult Suffrage, as put in this letter, was substantially the same as our readers have already been made familiar with in the columns of *VOTES FOR WOMEN*. Similar views were urged in a letter to Mr. Asquith from Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, on behalf of the W.S.F.

The United Suffragists, in a letter from their Executive, also urged upon the members of the Cabinet that a wide Franchise Bill was the only way out of the present dead-lock; and in a further letter to M.P.'s, after the introduction of the Special Register Bill, showed the great opportunity that lay before the House of Commons to insist upon this "makeshift" being widened into a Franchise Bill to do justice to men and women alike.

Lobbying

A great deal of lobbying was done by Suffragists in the House of Commons, August 14-17, during the discussions on Registration and Franchise; and at the conference between M.P.'s and Suffragists, held in the House on August 15, Mrs. Fawcett, who arranged it, kindly suggested that the U.S. should present their point of view also, and Mr. Henry W. Nevinston attended on their behalf.

U.S. "AT HOMES" IN THE AUTUMN

An interesting series of discussion meetings, similar to those held in the spring and summer of this year, has been arranged by Mrs. Pethick Lawrence (as Hon. Secretary of the London members of the U.S.) for the coming autumn. At each of these the Chairman will deal with the Political Situation of the moment, and some well-known speaker will follow with an address on a special subject; discussion will be invited on both speeches.

The "At Homes" will be held at the Central Hall, Westminster, at 8 p.m.; and admission will be free. The first of the series will take place on Thursday, October 12; when Mrs. Pethick Lawrence will be in the Chair, and Miss Muriel Matters will speak. Further particulars of this and succeeding meetings, to be held fortnightly until Christmas, will be given in the October issue of *VOTES FOR WOMEN*.

REGISTRATION & ADULT SUFFRAGE

Remarkable Change of Opinion in the Press

Owing to the new position of the Suffrage movement, with which we deal in other parts of the paper, the line taken by the Press becomes of great importance. As our readers will see from the quotations we give on this page from daily and weekly papers, both London and provincial, that line is now almost universally a favourable one to settlement during the war. What is of still greater importance, Conservative newspapers that have always preferred a limited to a broad franchise, both for men and women, have been led, like ourselves, to accept an Adult Suffrage scheme as the only solution of the complex situation which has arisen, owing to the war, over the revision of the Register. We draw the attention of our readers especially to the opinions of the Lobby Correspondents.

The Observer (August 13)

Mr. Asquith and his colleagues must have courage, faith and insight; they must banish outworn prejudices; they must set themselves to find for the Constitution a basis which shall realise a full, sane theory of that democracy which has become the only possible form of government for this country. . . . Once for all let us simplify the thing. Let the right to vote be given to every man and woman who has attained years of responsibility: let us say, five-and-twenty, for then they have arrived at an age to put away childish things. The nation, by its bearing in two years of war, has earned this right to be trusted with its own destinies.

The New Statesman (August 19)

The experience of the great mass of women in munition work, whether as regards excessive hours of labour . . . deprivation of the usual extra rates for overtime, nightwork and Sunday duty, or the "sweating" rates per hour, is a convincing demonstration of the imperative need for not leaving women unprotected by the franchise when all the grave industrial issues of Reconstruction have to be faced.

Daily Mail (August 15)

The Government, pleading time and the pressure of the war as an excuse for not doing more, have done as little as possible. . . . A great opportunity has been missed. A grave injustice to our soldiers and sailors and to the war workers of both sexes has been committed.

Westminster Gazette (August 17)

The war has given us new ideas about women, just as it has given us new ideas about workmen. Their contribution has been immense; all the world sees their suffering and affliction. Never again are we likely to be told that because the woman does not bear arms she should be deprived of the privilege of the citizen. . . . The problem before us, therefore, is to bring women in to a franchise which, if it is to be really simplified, must be on an adult basis.

Daily Graphic (August 16)

It is impossible to maintain the old theory that men alone are entitled to a vote because in the last resort they alone are the defenders of the country. The men who are kept at home to make munitions are indisputably defenders of the country—and so are the women who work beside them.

Public Opinion (August 25)

"What are you to do with the women?" asked the Prime Minister last week. The nation seems to have given an overwhelming answer: "Give them the vote and let them vote at the next election." That is to-day the very concrete possibility which has forced its way into the political field. Fifty years ago Lord Derby spoke of the Franchise Bill of that day as "a leap in the dark." This will presumably be called "The leap in the light."

The Herald (August 19)

It may seem strange to some of us that the argument of "war work" should have been needed to make a suffragist of anybody and that recognition should be accorded to munition-making which was denied to motherhood. But we need not linger over that. However achieved, the triumph of women is here.

Daily Telegraph (August 15)

As for the political argument against such a step [i.e., the enfranchisement of soldiers and sailors] we do not think anyone having the smallest acquaintance with public life as it is, as distinguished from what it ought to be, could convince

himself that that step could be taken without raising the whole suffrage question, and especially the women's side of it, in the acutest form.

The Star (August 15)

Mr. Asquith's declaration that the women have a special claim to be heard is a most momentous change in his point of view. We believe that other old opponents of woman suffrage in the Cabinet have been converted by the war-work of the women. One Gun, One Vote; One Woman, One Vote; and One Man, One Vote are the stages by which, after the war, we shall reach adult suffrage. But we must first win the war.

Manchester Guardian (August 22)

Thus we come straight to adult suffrage, and that is the solution towards which everything seems to be tending. It is a vast and far-reaching change, and obviously, during war-time, it could only be brought about by consent. . . . What could be more fitting than that, at a time when the nation is one as it never has been one, and at a time also when every distinction alike of class and of sex is overridden in the common effort to support and strengthen the nation in its time of need, the basis of Parliamentary representation should be made no less wide and comprehensive? Nothing short of that will be adequate to so great an occasion, or supply a true and permanent organ for the full life and growth of the nation.

The Outlook (August 19)

We can go so far with Mr. Asquith as to agree that the experiences of the war have put the question of the suffrage on quite another basis. For example, the argument that women are not entitled to a vote inasmuch as they do not contribute to the defence of the realm has lost whatever force it may have possessed. . . . No impartial mind could maintain that they have not shown all the qualities equipping them for the task of helping to select the nation's legislators.

The New Witness (August 17)

It would, to our mind, be perfectly monstrous that families should be deprived of the vote because their male head had sacrificed his life for his country. A clause enfranchising the widows of soldiers killed in the war is the very minimum of justice which they have the right to demand.

Christian Commonwealth (August 23)

What is really wanted is an assurance that the Reconstruction Parliament will be elected on the widest possible electoral basis, and this the Registration Bill does not even pretend to give. There is now a real opportunity for preparing a bold and comprehensive scheme of franchise reform on the basis of adult suffrage. That is the simple and obvious alternative to these proposals, which are, in fact, merely an excuse for not dealing with the franchise on the broader lines that everyone from the Prime Minister downwards now perceives to be necessary.

Christian Science Monitor (July 24)

At the close of the present struggle, an economic readjustment will have to be made in the United Kingdom, and in other countries, unequalled in the history of labour. The question whether women should be barred from taking any effective part in such a readjustment is certainly one which presents all the elements of urgency.

Woolwich Pioneer (August 18)

We earnestly urge that all Labour men and women should keep this question clearly before them. It is practically certain that Parliament will take no further action in regard to it till the autumn. If, in the interval, we make up our minds firmly on the question and take the most practical and effective means to give expression to our will, adult suffrage for all men and for all women may at last be made the basis of our franchise laws.

Liverpool Weekly Post (July 22)

Women have helped the men to win the war, and they are now holding out their hands for the vote. Shall we give it them or fight them? There can, we think, be but one answer.

Ulster Guardian (August 12)

It is to be hoped that a service franchise which overlooks the services of women will not be sanctioned by the House of Commons.

Sheffield Daily Telegraph (August 22)

It is certain that any extension of the franchise in the case of men, however nobly it has been earned, will not go through without a renewed demand for votes for women.

Muswell Hill Record (August 11)

If war service is to be the test of fitness for the franchise, it is a truism that women are also qualified. Unless this is in some practical fashion acknowledged to be the case, all the extravagant praise of women war-workers counts for less than nothing, and Lord Derby's statement that "Women are now part and parcel of the great Army" is mere empty words.

OPINIONS OF LOBBY CORRESPONDENTS AND OTHERS

In the Daily Chronicle (Aug. 18)

Adult suffrage—which, of course, includes the enfranchisement of women—has suddenly advanced into the forefront of the political stage. Sir Edward Carson has unconsciously helped to push it forward by demanding the immediate enfranchisement of sailors and soldiers. That demand leads inevitably to adult suffrage.

In the Morning Post (Aug. 16)

There is good authority for the statement that the language employed by Mr. Asquith in his speech on Monday on the subject of women's suffrage understates the change which has taken place in his opinions on this matter. His words were rather ambiguous, but in fact he may now be reckoned as a supporter of the movement.

In the Scotsman (Aug. 14)

Even if women's franchise were out of the way, the position would not be easy. But women's franchise is not out of the way.

In Freeman's Journal (Aug. 15)

There can indeed be little doubt that a considerable change has come over public feeling in regard to the woman suffrage question as a result of the war.

In the Daily News (Aug. 16)

The party agents now report that there is a significant change of opinion throughout the country. . . . There is an attempt in some quarters to whittle away the significance of Mr. Asquith's pronouncement. But I hear on very good authority that the Prime Minister's speech indicates a personal change of opinion, and that he has now told the Cabinet that when the franchise is changed, as it must be, the women must be given votes.

H. W. Massingham in the Daily Chronicle (Aug. 12)

The one argument for the Coalition which really appeals to the people is that it unites them. The argument has not the strength it once possessed. But it would be entirely defeated by an unfair and uncandid dealing with the women's claim.

Lady Selborne in the Times (Aug. 19)

Parliament can grant or refuse votes to the fighting men, grant or refuse votes to the women. Members of Parliament, and they alone, are the judges in this matter, and on them alone the responsibility of the course they are taking will rest.

"A Wayfarer" in the Nation (Aug. 19)

The suffrage has taken such a bound forward as to leave some of its friends quite out of breath. In essence it is settled. The walls have fallen before the magic word, Reconstruction. No Parliament dealing with Reconstruction can be chosen on other than a national basis; and such a basis is unthinkable if women are left outside the electorate. But the breach once made proves to be of the widest character. . . . The real problem is seen to be one of adult suffrage: the admission of the nation as a whole to the great inquisition on its state that must be opened as soon as the war is over.

"A. P. N." in the Daily News (Aug. 11)

The woman's question has not been overlaid by the war. . . . On the contrary, I hold that the war is making it an issue vital to the nation. . . . The Register, when made, should be a register of men and women, and it is work for the winter meeting of Parliament. . . . When the franchise is given to women it must not now be weighed out like pounds of cheese. Nothing but generosity will avail. . . . Woman Suffrage must be on a democratic basis.

"Vane" in the Referee (Aug. 20)

I am now convinced by the war, after careful study of the facts, that continuity of purpose and labour is possible to so large a section of the other sex that it will be impossible to resist the demand of women for the suffrage after the war. Further, the folly, deceit, stupidity, and waste during this war convinces me that in the hard times that are coming women's "housekeeperly" virtues are necessary for the regeneration of England.

Articles and News contributed for insertion in **VOTES FOR WOMEN** should be sent to The Editors, **VOTES FOR WOMEN**, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C.

Subscriptions to the paper should be sent to The Publisher, **VOTES FOR WOMEN**, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C.

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SEPTEMBER, 1916.

THE NEW SUFFRAGE SITUATION.

Our cause has made an immense advance. We are not going to shout till we are out of the wood, nor raise the cry of victory till we get the enemy on the run. No supporter of the cause can slack off on the plea that the final triumph will now come of itself. Watchfulness and courage remain as necessary as ever, and the energy of determined conviction will be called upon in the near future as much as at any time in the past ten years. But, none the less, the advance is real and the outlook encouraging.

In our June number we described the difficulty of creating a new Register for the next General Election as presenting both a danger and an opportunity. The danger was that, as the easiest simplification of a Register, manhood suffrage might be adopted, with a measure of redistribution, and a reduction of the age qualification for soldiers and sailors, thus rendering any further extension of the Franchise unlikely for many years. The opportunity was that, owing to the advancing opinion of the country, women might be included in a measure finally creating a democratic form of government on a basis of adult suffrage. The course of events in the last month has very much diminished the danger, and increased the opportunity.

Mr. Asquith's Conversion

There have been many signs of the change, but as the first in importance we must place the Prime Minister's speech on Monday, August 14. In explaining his proposals for prolonging the present Parliament by a further term, and for constructing a confessedly makeshift Register for the next election, the Prime Minister contended that even if only a "Service Vote" were introduced into the new Register, it would be impossible to deny the claim of women to be included. To quote his actual words, he said:—

"I have received a great many representations from those who are authorised to speak for them (women), and I am bound to say that they presented to me not only a reasonable, but I think, from their point of view, an unanswerable case. . . . They point out—and we cannot possibly deny their claim—that during this war the women of this country have rendered as effective service in the prosecution of the war as any other class of the community."

Our opponents may object that Mr. Asquith was maintaining the claim of the Suffrage as a "reward" for women's patriotic work. That is not our interpretation. We believe that, owing to women's splendid energies during the war,

Mr. Asquith has made the rather belated discovery that woman's work counts in the welfare of the community, and that women therefore, being an essential part of the State, must share its privileges as well as its labours. To supporters of the Suffrage the discovery was not new. Great as the service of women has been during war, it is always equally great and equally essential during peace. The only difference is that in war the service attracts greater attention, and becomes more obvious to people in Mr. Asquith's position. And so we hear about "reward" where we have always spoken simply of justice.

Women and Reconstruction

But Mr. Asquith in his speech proceeded to another point, which seems to us even more important and vital. "What is more," he continued:—

"What is more, and this is a point which makes a special appeal to me, they say when the war comes to an end, and when these abnormal and, of course, to a large extent transient, conditions have to be revised, and when the process of industrial reconstruction has to be set on foot, have not the women a special claim to be heard on the many questions which will arise directly affecting their interests, and possibly meaning for them large displacements of labour? I cannot think that the House will deny that, and I say quite frankly that I cannot deny that claim."

Coming from the Prime Minister, who has hitherto been by far our most powerful opponent, these are strong and significant words. We are fully aware that they do not absolutely commit Mr. Asquith to support our cause actively. We know with what caution a statesman's words must be scrutinised. But we take the words as we believe they were meant. We take them as honestly expressing a reasoned and considered change of view. There are moments when distrustful suspicion is not only the most ungenerous but the most obstructive policy. We think it would be impossible for the Prime Minister to go back upon those words and reappear as one among our opponents once more without loss of honour in the eyes of the country. And we are confirmed in this opinion by the statement of Mr. Gulland, the Chief Liberal Whip, to the Northern Men's Federation for Women's Suffrage. He is reported to have said (August 18):—

He was assured that there was a very considerably change in the minds of several leaders in both parties who had been strong opponents of women's suffrage, and these included the Prime Minister himself, the most powerful man in the country.

The Conversion of the Press

The change in the mind of the Press, especially of the Conservative Press, has been equally significant. The *Observer* led the way, as it so often does, in a fine and generous policy. In its leading article of August 13 it said:—

"The time has come to give a new meaning to Democracy; to make it a real thing, the true voice of the nation, and not of a part, more or less arbitrarily and often foolishly selected. Once for all let us simplify the thing. Let the right to vote be given to every man and woman who has attained years of responsibility."

The *Daily Mail* followed, saying the refusal to extend the Register was "a grave injustice to our soldiers and sailors and to the war workers of both sexes." The *Daily Express* was equally strong; the *Daily Graphic* much stronger. But to myself, the most remarkable advance is seen in the *Westminster Gazette*. On August 17 the editor of that paper, always so circumspect, so sensitive to the movement of the Governmental mind, came down definitely upon our side:—

We are getting very near—if we have not quite reached—a general admission that there can be no

step forward in the franchise which does not include women. The war has given us new ideas about women, just as it has given us new ideas about workmen. Their contribution has been immense; all the world sees their suffering and affliction. Never again are we likely to be told that because the woman does not bear arms she should be deprived of the privilege of the citizen. The Prime Minister himself has just said that, when the war ends, she will have a special claim to be heard on the many questions arising out of the return to civil life which must directly affect her interests. The problem before us, therefore, is to bring women into a franchise which, if it is to be really simplified, must be on an adult basis.

The Accepted Time

Such utterances from Conservatives and Liberals alike prove that the "silent revolution" of which we used to hear has now become vocal. They also prove that, as we always maintained, a Coalition Government gives the best opportunity. Conferences of members and others have already been held in the House of Commons, and resolutions following the general lines of our programme have been adopted. The Prime Minister has promised to appoint a Select Committee to consider the whole franchise question during the recess. It is for Suffragists to allow this most promising Parliamentary situation to develop upon its natural and hopeful lines, while they maintain their watchfulness and concentrate their energies for the future. *Punch* has a scornful cartoon intended to show that men and women workers are too busy to think of Registers and Franchises. At best, that is only half a truth. "Now is the accepted time," says the wiser *Observer* in its second leading article upon our cause. If the workers are too busy to safeguard their own future, this Parliament, which, in the words of the *Daily News* long ago, was elected with a mandate for democracy, and the majority of whose Members gave pledges for woman suffrage—this Parliament must see that, when the moment for beginning the long process of reconstruction comes, all who will be affected by that process shall have in it the voice of responsibility and the claim to political protection. The whole country strains every effort and submits to every suffering in a war for the cause of freedom. When the war ends let it not be said that, as far as half the country is concerned, the effort and the suffering have been vain.

Henry W. Nevinson.

"VOTES FOR WOMEN"

It is more essential than ever, in view of the public interest that is now roused over women's matters and their relation to the Suffrage movement, that the sale of our paper, **VOTES FOR WOMEN**, should be extended as widely as possible. The circulation has increased in the last two months, but there is scope for a still greater extension of our sphere of influence, and we make a strong appeal to all who think our message is worth giving to take out an extra annual subscription to the paper at once. The paper can be sent to a Free Library, a doctor's or dentist's waiting-room, a friend, a soldier at the Front, or to one of the innumerable men's or women's Clubs or reading-rooms. To facilitate matters, we publish on the back page of this issue a subscription form for the purpose.

HOW TO ORDER THE PAPER

To ensure receiving the paper regularly (it appears on the last Thursday in every month), fill in and cut out the order form on the back page of this issue, and send it, with 2s., to the Publisher, **VOTES FOR WOMEN**, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C.

A MODERN REVOLUTION

By Emmeline Pethick Lawrence

To-day it must be apparent to all whose eyes are open that we are living in the midst of a revolution. A revolution industrial, social and moral. It is but necessary to use our eyes to become aware of the change that has passed over the scene. Go into the streets of our great cities early in the morning and you will see a procession of women and girls who hasten to turn the great wheel of industry which makes the world go round. Amongst them are tram conductors, ticket collectors, porters, lathe turners, engineers, munition workers, messengers, van drivers, carriers, clerks and accountants. They march along with head erect, with gay and independent carriage, self-respecting and universally respected. The newspapers are full of pictures of women who have discarded the traditional feminine dress. Girls are depicted in tunic, knickerbockers and gaiters, engaged in the management and stabling of horses, or in digging, planting, market gardening, hoeing turnips, ploughing the furrows, loading carts for the harvest, or even spreading manure over the fields; and nobody has a word of criticism or of disapproval to speak. So far from this sensible out-of-door dress detracting from the feminine charm of the girls who wear it, it is felt to be an additional attraction and the best method of expressing youthful energy and grace. Suddenly, as a people, we have discovered that clothes that give to women the greatest freedom of action and the best protection from the changes of weather are the most admirable.

The Harem Has Notice to Quit!

This realization means a great deal more than is at first obvious. It means that the mass mind has moved from the oriental conception of womanhood, which has been imbedded in the system of religion and morals that originated in the East. It means that, though in climates where life is easy and calls for little in the way of strenuous endeavour the conception of women veiled and swathed, mysterious and languid, may signify beauty, such an ideal is utterly out of place in a climate such as ours, and unsuited to our northern vigorous temperament and to the needs of our civilization. In short, this acceptance by the mass mind of the revolution in women's dress means a complete revolution of its thought about women's position and function in the community. It means that the harem conception of womanhood has received from western civilization its notice to quit. Henceforward—owing to the pressure of necessity and the need for human labour to make good the vast destruction of the war—the ideal for women and for men must be one of active, resourceful, equal comradeship in all the affairs of industrial, social and national life.

A Human Community

In the changed world of to-day, it is not only the sharpness of distinction of sex that is giving way before the new necessity. Distinctions of class are also on the way to becoming obliterated. It occasions no surprise to-day, when, as in my own little country town, the daughter of the leading solicitor drives the baker's cart and delivers bread to the neighbours: nor when the young woman of title washes the dishes in a

canteen for munition workers. This is as it should be—and as we hope in the future it will be. When the best powers of all who have gifts of brain and energy are employed upon the creation of public wealth, and the labour of all is turned to social service and not to individual profit, when class distinctions and sex differences sink into their proper place of comparative unimportance, when women as well as men enjoy economic independence, when amongst women and men it is only the creators and workers who are respected—then and not till then will the foundations of a truly human community be laid.

Down to Bedrock

Towards this state of things we have during the last ten years taken many strides. The Woman's Movement is responsible for much of the change. But the two years of European war have brought about the actual revolution, in the midst of which we are now living. War is like an earthquake. It shakes things to their level. It brings all flimsily-built erections of tradition or opinion down to bedrock.

If women had been devoid of public spirit, lacking in efficiency, incapable of sustained effort, deficient in organizing ability, or insusceptible to organization—if women had been unable to bear the burden, or to take the strain which war imposes on every responsible unit of a nation's adult population, this war would have proved these facts beyond argument or dispute. Everybody realizes that this war has proved the reverse of all these propositions. The organs of the National Press have vied with one another to assert that women have saved the nation in the hour of its crisis.

In other words, women have found their level in the modern world—the level of human equality with men. And men have found their level of equality, and have not hesitated to admit it.

The Future and the Franchise

The result is that the eyes of the great mass of people in this country are opened by war experience as no appeal to mere reason could have opened them. They see for themselves the absurdity of the idea of dividing the community of adult human beings into two sections determined by the accident of sex—the male half essential to the nation, the female half accessory: the male half self-governing, the female half subjected. Hence arises the demand of a re-awakened and re-united democracy for the political enfranchisement of all men and women. Can the actual revolution that has already taken place in popular thought and in national custom be translated into the political arena by the enactment in the immediate future of a comprehensive measure of franchise reform, which will give the vote to all adult women and men? Upon the answer to this question depends the social and industrial welfare of the population of this country.

It is absolutely essential in the interests of men of the industrial classes, as well as in the interests of women themselves, that women gain their enfranchisement before the period sets in of reconstruction after the war. For, if the enfranchisement of women be delayed, even for a few years, the same irretrievable mistake from the point of view of the workers will be made, as was made at the close of the Napoleonic wars.

A hundred years ago machinery as a wealth-producing power was discovered. Machinery was utilized to make good the destruction that the war had wrought. But the wealth made of machinery was not inherited by the masses of the people, but was turned into a new means for their enslavement. The discovery of women as a wealth-producing power is as great a portent for the human race as was the discovery of machinery. The workers tried to limit the application of machinery to industry. But they failed. They will fail to limit the application of this discovery of women. You cannot put back the hands of the clock. You cannot repress power that has once been evolved.

The Great Opportunity

But a united democracy can use all wealth-producing power, and all wealth, in the interests of the whole community, and for the advancement of the whole human race. The opportunity which now offers itself to a united democracy is the demand for the enfranchisement of all men and women. It is an opportunity which should be seized by all democrats, all lovers of their country, and all well-wishers of the human race.

UNITED SUFFRAGISTS AND THE CRISIS

We are of opinion that every Suffrage Society that has, in however small a way, upheld our cause all through the difficult period of the war has a right to be congratulated on the more favourable turn that Suffrage affairs have taken in the last few weeks; for every one of them has helped to keep the public aware of the connection between women's service and women's citizenship. So it is not in order to accentuate any share the United Suffragists may have had in bringing about this result, but for the sake of U.S. members and other readers who have backed up the efforts of the U.S. Executive, that we publish the following generous letters from two respected colleagues in the Suffrage movement.

From Miss Harriet Newcomb, Hon. Secretary of the British Dominions' Woman Suffrage Union to the Hon. Secretary of the U.S.

May I, on behalf of the societies which form this Union, send to your Society warmest congratulations on the turn in the fortunes of the Woman's Movement indicated by Mr. Asquith's speech on Monday? How much of this is due to the way the flag has been kept flying by the U.S. during these years of the war! I know that I speak for thousands of women Overseas when I offer their heartfelt thanks for the grand work your society has done, and best wishes for success in the fight that still remains to be fought. August 16, 1916.

From Mr. J. Beanland, Hon. Secretary of the Manchester Men's League for Women's Suffrage, to the Hon. Secretary of the U.S.

At our last Executive I was instructed to write you conveying an expression of the great satisfaction we have felt at the prompt and effective action taken by the United Suffragists in connection with the recent developments of the Registration question, and our congratulations upon the admirably drafted circular sent to every member of Parliament, which we are convinced must have had the best of results.

August 7, 1916.

UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

27, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. Telephone, Holborn 5880

THE CAMPAIGN

Sunday, September 3; 6 p.m.—Open Air.—Hyde Park. Speakers: Mr. Darby and others.

Thursday, September 7; 5 p.m.—Open Air.—Hyde Park. Speakers: Mrs. Gregory and others.

Thursday, September 14; 5 p.m.—Open Air.—Hyde Park.

Friday, September 15; 7.45 p.m.—Lecture and Discussion.—Onward Buildings, Manchester. Dr. Herbert on "Pre-Marital Relationships."

Sunday, September 17; 6 p.m.—Open Air.—Hyde Park.

Thursday, September 21; 8 p.m.—Public Meeting.—Liverpool. Speaker: Miss Brewster.

Thursday, September 21; 5 p.m.—Open Air.—Hyde Park.

Friday, September 22; 8 p.m.—Annual Members' Meeting.—Onward Buildings, Manchester.

Thursday, September 28; 8 p.m.—London Members' Meeting.—Essex Hall, Strand.

Friday, September 29; 7.45 p.m.—Lecture and Discussion.—Onward Buildings, Manchester. Dr. Herbert on "Marital Relationships."

Saturday, September 30; 4-7 p.m.—Social Afternoon.—Queen's College, Birmingham.

Sunday, September 31; 5 p.m.—Open Air.—Hyde Park.

TO LONDON MEMBERS OF THE U.S.

London members are asked to keep the evening of Thursday, September 28, free, as a meeting for members only will be held on that evening in the Essex Hall, at 8 p.m., to inaugurate the autumn work and talk over the development of the Parliamentary situation of our movement. They will receive a reminder in due course, and it is hoped that they will make a point of being present if possible.

U.S. WOMEN'S CLUB

92, Borough Road, S.E.

Secretary, Miss M. R. Cochrane. Tel.: Hop 4172

The Club will re-open after the summer recess on Monday, September 4, at 3 p.m. The Tuesday evening Suffrage meetings will begin on Tuesday, September 19.

THE CHRISTMAS SALE

A Sale will be held before Christmas in aid of the funds of the U.S. Women's Club. The date and place will be announced in the October number of VOTES FOR WOMEN. Meanwhile, will all U.S. members and friends set to work as speedily as possible to provide articles for sale, ranging from soldiers' comforts to babies' garments, from blouses to overalls? It is specially requested that in making jam or pickles, or in bottling fruit, all will set aside a pot or two for the Provision Stall. All particulars may be obtained from Miss Brewster (at the U.S. offices, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C.), who, as in former years, will organize the Sale, and to whom offers of stalls may be sent.

Other Suffrage Societies

Suffrage Societies are again being asked to co-operate, the proceeds of their stalls to be given to their own funds. The Free Church League has already consented to do so, also the Suffragettes of the W.S.P.U.

Stalls Already Taken

The following stalls are already taken:—

Provisions.—Hampstead U.S.

Christmas Cards and Calendars.—Kensington U.S.

Fancy Articles.—Mrs. Craies.

Oriental Stall.—Mrs. Cavendish-Bentinck.

ASHFORD U.S.

Hon. Sec.: Mr. John Marsh, 45, Royd's Road, Willsborough, Kent. Organizer: Miss Maude White, Magazine House, Winchelsea, Sussex.

The railwaymen are being worked up to aid in a campaign culminating in a large public meeting, to take place in October. A girls' war club is being run at Ashford, for whose benefit a garden party was kindly given last month by Mrs. Dell, at Kennington, Ashford; Mrs. Cavendish-Bentinck gave an address. The club has been asked to take a stall at a neighbouring bazaar in aid of funds to help prisoners of war.

BIRMINGHAM U.S.

Hon. Sec.: Miss M. Haly, 13, Suffolk Street

At the recent members' meeting arrangements were discussed for the forthcoming "Social." Will members please note that the date is now fixed for September 30? (See Campaign list.) All offers of food, &c., will be gratefully accepted by Mrs. Gristwood, 379, Harborne Road, Edgbaston. A very enjoyable afternoon is promised, and it is hoped all members will help to contribute towards its success by coming themselves and bringing as many friends as possible.

The office will be closed for the first part of September. After its reopening, tickets, price 9d., may be bought on Tuesday or Friday afternoons, or applied for in writing.

GLASGOW U.S.

Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Macaulay, 55, Bath Street, Glasgow

We have been holding quite successful open-air meetings in Glasgow throughout the whole of July, and on August 3 a very good meeting took place at Caition Place, when the chair was taken by Mrs. Agnes Dollan, and Mrs. Crawford and Mrs. Nixon spoke to an attentive audience. Three dozen papers were sold, and a good collection was taken. On August 17 a meeting was held at Great Wellington Street. Speakers, Miss Rose and Mrs. Dollan; chair, Mrs. A. Wallace. Miss Thomson has been holding meetings at Hunter's Quay during her holidays. We are very sorry she has had to resign her post of Hon. Secretary to the Glasgow U.S., owing to press of work; but she will now be able to devote more time to speaking for us, and Mrs. Macaulay (44, Albert Drive, Cresshill) has kindly consented to act as Hon. Secretary pro tem.

HAMPSTEAD AND GOLDER'S GREEN U.S.

Hon. Secretaries: Miss Daisy Solomon, 64, Pattison Road, N.W.; Miss Dorothy Pethick, 39, Meadow Way Court, Golder's Green, N.W.

Our branch is undertaking the Provision Stall at the forthcoming Sale in aid of the U.S. Women's Club, which is to be held before Christmas. We hope that members will enlist the sympathies of their friends, and get promises of home-made jam, &c. An opportunity will be given members, early in October, to discuss more fully plans for the stall. The secretaries will welcome any useful suggestion.

LETCWORTH U.S.

Hon. Sec.: Miss Ruth Pym, 2, Meadow Way Green

In July a meeting was organised in conjunction with Suffrage and other women's societies in Letcworth, to urge the claims of women in regard to the Registration Bill then under consideration by the Government. We were so fortunate as to have both Miss Evelyn Sharp and Mr. John Scurr on the platform, and a very successful meeting was held, the resolution being passed unanimously. A collection was taken to defray expenses. The committee are meeting shortly, to arrange for the winter's activities.

LIVERPOOL U.S.

Hon. Sec.: Miss Isabel Buxton, 111, Queen's Road

We hope to have a public meeting on September 21, with Miss Brewster as speaker. Full particulars will be sent out later. Quite a number of VOTES FOR WOMEN have been sold lately at various public meetings. We should be glad of volunteers for selling, and of notices of meetings where we might sell. Will any members, who could help to make a U.S. evening at the Club a success, let us have particulars of what they are willing to do, at once?

U.S. IN STREATHAM, NORWOOD AND BRIXTON

Mrs. C. Gregory would be glad if anyone in the above three districts, who is willing to give a drawing-room At Home, no matter how small, during the winter months, will kindly communicate with her at 6, Gibson's Hill, Norwood.

WOMEN'S AFFILIATION

The Women's Franchise Society has now been affiliated to the United Suffragists. The Hon. Secretary is Mrs. McCabe, Melrose Bridge Lane, Hendon, N.W.

U.S. FUND

Subscriptions Received July 16—Aug. 15, 1916

£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Mrs. Almond.....	1 0 0	In Memoriam
Mrs. Baillie.....		J. A. S.
Weaver	2 0 0	Mrs. Maitland ...
Miss M. and J. Barrowman ...	0 5 0	Mr. and Mrs. Merrick
Mrs. Cavendish		Miss Pole
Bentinck	1 0 0	Miss Postlethwaite
Mrs. Cairns	1 0 0	The Misses Prior
J. Darbyshire, Esq.....	0 2 6	Miss J. Reed.....
Miss K. Ellison...	0 3 0	Miss E. Sharp ...
Miss K. W. Evans	0 3 0	Miss K. Walford.
Miss A. Fraser ...	0 8 0	Miss K. Williams
Miss E. Gulland .	0 10 0	2 Shilling
Miss J. Gulland .	0 5 0	Subscriptions
Miss I. Hadley ...	0 10 0	
Miss S.W. Holden	0 10 0	
		£18 14 0

DO YOU WANT AN OFFICE?

Owing to reduction of staff consequent upon the change of VOTES FOR WOMEN from a weekly to a monthly paper, two large airy rooms (with separate entrance and intercommunicating) are now available on the premises of the United Suffragists at 27, Chancery Lane, W.C. They could be let furnished or unfurnished, for a short or long period, and are fitted with electric light and telephone. Application should be made to Mrs. Ayrtton Gould, United Suffragists, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C. (Tel.: Holborn 5880.)

UNITED SUFFRAGISTS BALANCE SHEET, 1915

Owing to the war the balance sheet for 1915 was not ready in time for inclusion in the U.S. Report for 1915. We therefore print it below.

Dr.	INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT, 1st JANUARY to 31st DECEMBER, 1915.				Cr.							
EXPENDITURE.		£	s.	d.	INCOME.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To	Rent, Heating, Light, and Telephone ...	208	14	0	By	Balance January, 1915:						
"	Salaries	319	10	0		Cash on hand and at Bank	444	9	3			
"	General Expenses, including Advertising					Credit on Newspaper						
	and Publicity	708	1	8		Account	49	1	9			
"	Meetings	148	4	7						493	11	0
"	Postage, &c.	127	11	10	"	Subscriptions and Donations				870	17	4
"	Election and Provincial Expenses ...	54	9	7	"	Do. (Women's Club)				268	1	9
"	*Women's Club Expenses... ..	314	7	4	"	Sale of Newspaper, Advertisements, &c.				1,278	1	0
"	Production of Newspaper... ..	1,662	4	8								
"	Carriage	56	15	10								
"	Balance, 31st December, 1915:—											
		£	s.	d.								
	Cash on hand and at Bank	351	5	2								
	Less Loss on VOTES FOR											
	WOMEN, contributed out											
	of Assets	40	13	7								
		310	11	7								
		3,910	11	1								

The above account has been compiled from the books and vouchers of the Society, and we certify it correct and duly vouched.

SAYERS & WESSON, Chartered Accountants, Auditors.

19, Hanover Square, W., 4th August, 1916.

* The deficit shown in the Women's Club balance is due to the fact that the money raised at the sale held in December was not all realised by the end of the year. This fund is, therefore, not included in the 1915 balance sheet.

COMPARISON OF PUNISHMENTS

LIGHT SENTENCES

Assaults on Children

The *Western Evening Herald* (August 4) reports case of a watercress vendor, charged before the Bench at Plymouth with committing an offence against a little girl of 7 in the Park. There were four previous convictions against him for larceny. The Bench reduced the charge to common assault. Sentence: *Two months' hard labour.*

The *Berwick Advertiser* (July 7) reports case of a married soldier charged at the Newcastle Summer Assizes before Mr. Justice Atkin with a criminal assault on a girl of fifteen. The defence was that he did not know her age. She stated on oath that she told him her age, but that he had not told her he was married. The first jury disagreed; the second found him guilty. The Judge called his conduct "very wicked."

Sentence: *Six months' imprisonment.*

Attack on a Deaf-Mute

The *Times* (August 9) reports case of four soldiers charged at Dover Police Court with assaulting a deaf-mute. The defence was that they took him for a German spy, because the way he made sounded like "Ja."

Sentence: *Two fined £1 each, and two discharged.*

HEAVY SENTENCES

Forgery

The *Glasgow Weekly Herald* (August 19) reports case of an official of the Army Pay Corps charged at Perth before Sheriff Sym with forging and uttering an Army money order and stealing nine others. He had been convicted of fraud in other parts of the country.

Sentence: *Two years' imprisonment.*

The *Times* (August 2) reports case of a man charged before Mr. Allan Lawrie at the London Sessions with breaking into a shop and stealing a number of dental appliances. There were many previous convictions for burglary.

Sentence: *Five years' penal servitude.*

Begging

The *Morning Advertiser* (July 24) reports case of a man charged at the Police Court before Alderman Sir Walter Martin with begging in the City. There were previous convictions for begging.

Sentence: *Three months' hard labour.*

WAGES OF MUNITION MAKERS

As Miss Mary Macarthur says, in an able letter which appeared in the *Nation* (August 19), "the sentiment that used to spend itself upon 'the hand that rocks the cradle' is now transferred to the hand that turns the shell." But, unfortunately, sentiment has never secured the mother a living wage, and now we see that it is not going to do so even for the munition worker. For the women who are not actually doing men's work in munitions ("more than half the women employed outside the national factories, and which are automatically included," according to Dr. Addison) a standard wage—not a minimum, but a maximum—of 4d. and 4½d. per hour, according to whether she is paid by piece or time, has now been fixed by Order 447, more than which, by law, the employers of these women are not justified in paying. Indeed, in the letter already quoted, Miss Macarthur gives an instance of an employer who, having offered to pay 6½d. an hour, withdrew his offer because Order 447 was held to apply to his factory.

The Worth of Fourpence Halfpenny

We would remind our readers that 4d. and 4½d. represent something less than 3d. at pre-war rates; that food prices have gone up 65 per cent., that the women who are being paid this pittance are forced under the Munitions Act to remain with an employer who refuses them a leaving certificate, although better wages may be offered in another factory. And outside the women affected by Order 447 there are thousands of other women, according to Miss Macarthur, employed on war work and subject to the penal clauses of the Munitions Act, who have no guaranteed rate of wages at all.

A deputation of women trade unionists were promised by Dr. Addison, on August 3, that their representations with regard to Order 447 "would receive favourable consideration." But since this gentleman, speaking as though it were a matter for congratulation, assured the House of Commons, in the debate on August 15, that "there has never been a document issued by a Department of State which secures to women doing women's work a wage of £1 or anything like it," we do not feel overconfident with regard to the official definition of "favourable consideration." For £1 is worth only 12s. 6d. nowadays; and we do not consider 12s. 6d. a living wage for any woman, least of all for the woman who is overwhelmed with Ministerial compliments whenever she is mentioned on the political platform.

LABOUR AND THE WOMAN'S VOTE

The Trade Union Congress

The Trade Union Congress will be held at Birmingham after we go to press. The Parliamentary Committee are putting forward a strong resolution with regard to electoral and registration reform, demanding the vote for all adults, men and women.

The Dockers

Before the introduction of the Special Register Bill, the following resolution was passed and forwarded to the N.M.F. by Mr. Ben Tillett:—

"This Executive Council of the Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union pledges itself to support the women of the country in their efforts to obtain recognition as citizens, and calls upon the Government to include women as voters in any amendment or addition to the Registration Act."

The War Emergency Committee

At a meeting of the War Emergency Workers' National Committee, held at the House of Commons on August 17, after the shelving of the Special Register Bill, the following resolution was unanimously passed:—

"That this Workers' National Committee, representative of a large section of the Labour movement, affirms that war conditions have only served to emphasise the justice of every adult member of the community having a voice in the nation's affairs, including both soldiers and sailors with the Colours, with their wives and adult daughters at home, as well as men and women engaged in munition and other civil and military occupations, and, indeed, every class of the population."

"The National Committee is therefore convinced of the total inadequacy of the Government Bill to deal with the Parliamentary register during the continuance of the war."

"It points out that the proposals will lead to a multiplication of the numerous anomalies, complications, and injustices that prevailed previous to the war, and leaves the just claim for a full franchise absolutely untouched."

"In view of the desirability that all responsible sections of the community should be represented in the Parliament which will have to deal with the vast problems of national reconstruction following the peace settlement, the Committee is of opinion that the Government should withdraw the present Bill and immediately set up a Select Committee representative of all parties in the House of Commons to consider the various phases of the franchise problem, including an adequate scheme of redistribution, so that when the next appeal to the electorate is made that electorate should be in a general sense the nation as a whole."

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

We should have thought that this was scarcely the appropriate moment for the issue of Sir Dyce Duckworth's address (in pamphlet form) to the Women's Diocesan Society, on "The Ordained Limits of Women's Action in Christian Society" (Jarrold and Sons. Price 6d. net). Almost every public personage, from the Prime Minister and Lord Derby onwards, is telling woman at this juncture to go into the munition factory and the fields, to become "part and parcel of the Army," to keep the soldiers supplied at the front, and the whole industry of the country going—in short, to do almost anything in the world rather than waste her time in the home.

1884 and 1916

This being so, it strikes us as not quite tactful, to put it mildly, to begin a discussion on women's sphere to-day with a series of quotations—mainly Victorian—of which a typical one is the following extract from a letter written by William Butler, Dean of Lincoln, in 1884:—

"It is to my mind by far and beyond all comparison, the saddest feature of this generation that women are claiming, and are encouraged to claim, a position which is not intended for them; and that they do not perceive the inevitable consequence that, while they can never emulate men in men's work, and can at best be but poor imitators, they will lose that most grand power and influence which are really, and by God's providence, their own." We suppose that these words had some meaning in a year that was signalised in Parliament by the betrayal of the women's cause; but it is difficult to imagine how Sir Dyce Duckworth, M.D., LL.D., F.R.C.P., reconciles them in 1916 with his own admission that the war has forced women into occupations hitherto regarded as "appropriate only for men," and that "in many cases such work has been admirably done."

Consistency, however, is not Sir Dyce Duckworth's most striking characteristic. Declaring that "we doctors desire a fair field for the employment of their abilities as women," he proceeds to dictate what are and what are not their abilities. Of the political arena he says: "I regard this as no place for women, and as distinctly unfitting them for their specific duties."

EXTRACTS FROM THE DEBATE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON AUGUST 16 ON THE SECOND READING OF THE SPECIAL REGISTER BILL

Sir John Simon: It was said by the Prime Minister that you cannot approach this difficult and vital question now because of the inevitable preoccupation and strain and stress which lies upon any man who has a public duty to discharge in guiding the destinies of the country. Does anybody really think that the moment the war is over we are going to find ourselves in a time without stress or strain, and that that is the moment we are going to have abundant leisure for considering these difficult matters? . . . Are we really acting wisely if we proceed on the assumption that the atmosphere and the temper will be better and more hopeful for the solution of such problems when the anxiety of war is over, and these complex questions of reconstruction are pressing to be solved?

Mr. Dickinson: Women do not say "Men shall not have the vote unless we have the vote." What they say is that if service and sacrifice of the individual is to be the basis of the franchise that where service and sacrifice is shown to have been exhibited it should give the same right as they give to men. . . . I believe that in the present state of public opinion the Committee and this House will assent to that proposition.

A CONVERSION

Mr. Pringle: I have in the past, on every occasion when I have had an

in any community." Smoking is "an oriental habit," one of those follies which "indicate regrettable mental and moral conditions." Women surgeons for the wounded he regards "as both unseemly and unnecessary, certainly in this country, and probably in all the foreign fields of war," and he adds: "I do not regard it as a fitting duty for women—to which they should not have been allotted, even temporarily." Really, we are not sure, in view of the recent commandeering of women surgeons by the War Office, whether this stricture upon their employment might not almost be regarded as an infringement of the Defence of the Realm Act!

The Coarse Man's Taste

The Law, as a profession for woman, is similarly condemned; but she is recommended to teach the young, if only to oust the foreign "traitors and traitresses" who have done so much "to undermine the characters of our children, happily with small results to their faith and patriotism." Music, also apparently in the hope of lessening foreign competition, is relegated to the woman; and so is literature, as long as she avoids "the lapse of propriety and morality in respect of novels." We do not quite know why architecture is considered unwomanly, and chartered accountancy the opposite. And the following argument for womanliness in woman leaves us breathless with amazement: "An unnatural woman is an affront to man, but a womanly woman is irresistible to the coarsest man in possession of his senses."

However, all is well, for the lecturer concludes by saying:—

"One thing appears to me to be quite certain, that you will only secure the best and enduring results of any efforts for her betterment by presenting her to man in all the dignity, gentleness and grace of her sex."

We advise Sir Dyce Duckworth to keep out of the munition factory, the Cradley Heath forges, and above all, the one-roomed tenement in which a woman is trying to bring up her family on a few shillings a week. We think it might perhaps give him an unpleasant shock to realise the full potentialities of the accepted "limits of women's action in Christian society."

opportunity of voting on the question, voted against woman suffrage. But I am inclined in this matter to follow the Prime Minister. . . . How are you going to adjust the rights and claims of the returning soldier with the rights and claims of the women, who for national purposes you have asked to go into industry during the war? I think that for the right adjustment of this question you require to give the women a vote in the election for the Parliament which will determine them. I think both ought to be consulted.

Captain Stephen Gwynn: Do you think you can test this question as to whether women should have votes on the basis of whether they can make shells or do service like men? Women are entitled to the vote on their work as women, on the work they do in governing the house, in the education of children, and in their work of preparing men to go out and take their part in the trenches. That is why women deserve the vote.

Mr. Walter Long: But if sacrifice is to be the basis of our franchise, or of a special franchise, what of the women who in the Royal Army Medical Corps, and in many other capacities, have taken as great risks and have made as great sacrifices as almost any of our soldiers? I do not think it would be possible to draw this distinction.

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